



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/916,122	07/26/2001	Carl Johan Friddle	LEX-0206-USA	8781

24231 7590 05/22/2003

LEXICON GENETICS INCORPORATED  
8800 TECHNOLOGY FOREST PLACE  
THE WOODLANDS, TX 77381-1160

EXAMINER

ULM, JOHN D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1646

DATE MAILED: 05/22/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/916,122

Applicant(s)

Friddle et al.

Examiner

John Ulm

Art Unit

1646



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Mar 10, 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s): \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Unit: 1646

1) Claims 1 to 5 are pending in the instant application. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended and claims 3 to 5 have been added as requested by Applicant in Paper Number 8, filed 10 March of 2003.

2) Any objection or rejection of record which is not expressly repeated in this action has been overcome by Applicant's response and withdrawn.

3) The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

4) Claims 1 to 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because they are drawn to an invention with no apparent or disclosed specific and substantial credible utility for those reasons of record as applied to claims 1 and 2 in section 2 of Paper Number 6. Essentially as stated therein, the instant claims are directed to an isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a putative G protein-coupled receptor protein. The specification, however, does not disclose a specific biological role for this protein or its significance to a particular disease, disorder of physiological process which one would wish to manipulate for a desired clinical effect.

Applicant has essentially traversed this rejection on the premise that, because the instant specification describes polymorphisms of the claimed nucleic acid, it has utility in "diagnostic assays such as forensic analysis", in "mapping a unique gene to a particular chromosome" or in a "gene chip". The employment of a nucleic acid of the instant invention in forensic analysis, chromosomal mapping or as a component in a gene chip is not a specific and substantial utility. It is well known in the art of molecular biology that the nucleotide sequences encoding an amino

Art Unit: 1646

acid sequence of any particular protein will have inconsequential differences from individual to individual, as will the amino acid sequence encoded thereby. This is why all humans are not identical and why DNA fingerprinting works. Therefore, almost any cDNA can be employed as a forensic marker in some capacity, just as it can be used as a chromosomal or tissue marker or in a gene chip for expression profiling. These do not constitute specific utilities for the claimed nucleic acid. A specific forensic marker or gene chip component would be one which provided precise information about the individual from which a sample under analysis was taken, just as a specific chromosomal marker is one which is only associated with the presence of a specific disease, disorder or a distinguishing physical or physiological trait. Forensic markers in general, however, are only useful in the identification of the individual from which a sample originated through DNA fingerprinting, and provides no useful information about that individual beyond identification. Such utilities are not specific and substantial, and are analogous to the assertion that a particular protein can be employed as a molecular weight marker, which is neither a specific or substantial utility.

One could just as readily argue that any purified compound having a known structure could be employed as an analytical standard in such processes as nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), infrared spectroscopy (IR), and mass spectroscopy as well as in polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (PAGE), high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and gas chromatography. None of these processes could be practiced without either calibration standards having known molecular structures or, at least, a range of molecular weight markers having

Art Unit: 1646

known molecular weights. One could further extrapolate upon this premise by asserting that any item having a fixed measurable parameter can be employed to calibrate any machine or process which measures that parameter. For example, any item having a constant mass within an acceptable range can be employed to calibrate a produce scale in a grocery store. The calibration of produce scales is certainly an important function since most states require produce scales to be calibrated and certified. Therefore, to accept Applicant's arguments that any nucleic acid encoding any protein of human origin is useful as a marker would be comparable to conceding that any object of fixed mass has *prima facie* utility as a weight standard, irrespective of any other properties possessed by that object. It was just such applications that the court appeared to be referring to when it expressed the opinion that all chemical compounds are "useful" to the chemical arts when this term is given its broadest interpretation (*Brenner v. Manson*, 148 U.S.P.Q. 689 (Sus. Ct, 1966)). Because the steroid compound which was the subject of that decision had a known structure and molecular weight it could have readily been employed as a molecular standard at that time. Further, because that compound was a hydrocarbon it certainly could have been employed in the well known process of combustion for purposes of lighting and/or the generation of heat. The generation of heat by combustion of hydrocarbons certainly was and remains an important process. Irrespective of such obvious utilities, the court still held that the compound produced by the process at issue in *Brenner v. Manson* did not have a specific and substantial utility.

Art Unit: 1646

To grant Applicant a patent encompassing an isolated polynucleotide encoding a naturally occurring human protein of as yet undetermined biological significance would be to grant Applicant a monopoly "the metes and bounds" of which "are not capable of precise delineation". That monopoly "may engross a vast, unknown, and perhaps unknowable area" and "confer power to block off whole areas of scientific development, without compensating benefit to the public" (*Brenner v. Manson, Ibid*). To grant Applicant a patent on the claimed polynucleotide based solely upon an assertion that it can be employed as a forensic or chromosomal marker, or as one of many indistinct components in a gene chip is clearly prohibited by this judicial precedent since the compensation to the public is not commensurate with the monopoly granted and would be no different than granting a patent on the process disputed in *Brenner v. Manson* on the premise that the steroid produced thereby was useful as an analytical standard or as a combustible fuel source.

Applicant has further traversed this rejection on the premise that membership in the G protein-coupled receptor family is, alone, sufficient to establish a utility for a specific protein and, therefore, the claimed nucleic acid. Applicant asserts that a protein of the instant invention belongs to a family of proteins of which are the targets of 60% of the therapeutic agents currently on the market. This number is probably higher since a number of agents, such as antidepressants and hypertension medications, were being employed clinically before their site of action was known. However, each clinical agent which has been developed by measuring its interaction with a specific G protein-coupled receptor was evaluated against a receptor whose native ligand and physiological function were known, such as the adrenergic receptors, the dopamine receptors and

Art Unit: 1646

the serotonin receptors. There are also numerous G protein-coupled receptors such as odorant receptors and calcium sensing receptors which do not appear to mediate any clinically significant process. More importantly, an artisan knew, before they employed a specific G protein-coupled receptor to identify clinically useful compounds, which physiological process or processes they wished to manipulate and that the protein employed in their assay had an influence of that process. Even if one identifies an agonist or antagonist for a receptor of the instant invention by employing a cell comprising the claimed nucleic acid, this information is useless since one has no idea of what clinical effect the administration of that agonist or antagonist to an individual would have.

Applicant's reliance on *In re Brana*, 51 F.3d 1560,1566, 34 USPQ2d 1436 ,1441 (Fed. Cir. 1995) is misplaced. That court decision determined that a compound which belonged to a family of compounds known to have anti-tumor activity, which is a common and well established specific and substantial utility for that family of compounds, would be reasonably expected to have anti-tumor activity in light of positive *in vitro* data with respect to that particular compound since that data has proven to be an indicator of anti-cancer activity by other members of that family. The protein of the instant invention does not belong to a family of compounds with a common well established specific and substantial utility. As stated above, the utility of those members of the receptor family to which the protein encoded by the claimed nucleic acid in the instant application belongs lies in the knowledge that they modulate a specific physiological activity in response to a specific ligand. Since the instant specification does not credibly disclose the identity of a native ligand for the protein of the instant invention, simply knowing that a

Art Unit: 1646

protein of the instant invention is a member of the G protein-coupled receptor family is not particularly useful.

Applicant's reference to issued patents as establishing a patentable utility for the claimed nucleic acid is not persuasive because each application is examined on its own merits. In the decision of *In re Hutchison*, 69 USPQ 138 (CCPA, 1946), the court held that

"We are not concerned, of course, with the allowed claims in either the patent or in this application. The sole question for our determination is whether the six article claims on appeal were properly rejected below, and this we pass upon without further reference to, and without comparing them with, the claims in the patent or the claims which stand allowed in this application."

In essence, the position in the instant application that each application is examined on its own merits can be found in the judicial precedent cited above. The rejections in the instant application will only be withdrawn if they are shown to be legally or factually unsound.

5) Claims 1 to 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to adequately teach how to use the instant invention for those reasons given above with regard to the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

6) Applicant's arguments filed 10 March of 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for those reasons given above.

7) **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).



Art Unit: 1646

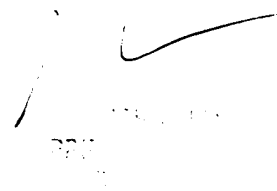
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John D. Ulm whose telephone number is (703) 308-4008. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yvonne Eyler can be reached at (703) 308-6564.

Official papers filed by fax should be directed to (703) 308-4242 or (703) 872-9306. Official responses under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 should be directed to (703) 872-9307.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

Handwritten signature and initials, possibly "J. Ulm", with a date stamp "JUN 11 2010" below it.